

Appl. No. 10/640,341

Amdt. Dated May 16, 2005

Reply to Office Action of February 14, 2005

Amendments to the Drawings:

Attached hereto please find amended figure 1, which replaces the original figure 1.

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REMARKS

Election/Restrictions

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121.

In response to the restriction requirement, applicant hereby affirms the election without transverse to prosecute the invention of group I, being claims 1-18.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because they fail to show details of a conventional surface light source in figure 1 as described in the specification.

In response to the drawing objections, applicant has carefully amended figure 1 in order to overcome the objections. Amended figure 1 is believed to show the required details of the disclosed and claimed surface light source device.

Claim Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter

By the above amendments, applicant has canceled claims 5 and 13 without prejudice, and has incorporated the substance of the limitation(s) thereof into amended independent claims 1 and 11 respectively. This has been done according to the remarks made by Examiner in the Office action under the heading Allowable Subject Matter.

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Accordingly, amended claim 11 is submitted to be allowable. Amended claim 12, amended claims 14-17, and claim 18 all depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 11. Accordingly, these dependent claims should also be allowable.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by USPN 6,545,732 to Nakano.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as to claim 1 as follows:

Amended claim 1 recites "**light source holders provided at corners of the light guide plate for fixing the light source.**" This limitation of amended claim 1 is not found or taught in Nakano. It demonstrates that Nakano does not teach forming a surface light source device comprising all limitations recited in amended claim 1.

Further, there is nothing in the cited reference that teaches or suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that they might or should provide the surface light source device of amended claim 1. Moreover, the surface light source device as recited in amended claim 1 produces new and unexpected results. That is, the relative positions of the light sources and the light guide plate are more easily controlled and accurately maintained according to their design specifications.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 is submitted to be both novel and unobvious over Nakano under both s.102(b) and s.103. Reconsideration and withdrawal of

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the rejection and allowance of amended claim 1 in respect of Nakano are respectfully requested.

Amended claims 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 all depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 1, and therefore should also be allowable in respect of Nakano.

Claims 1, 3, 9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 2002/0131261 A1 to Inui et al.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as to claim 1 as follows:

Amended claim 1 recites "light source holders provided at corners of the light guide plate for fixing the light source." This limitation of amended claim 1 is not found or taught in Inui et al. It demonstrates that Inui et al does not teach forming a surface light source device comprising all limitations recited in amended claim 1.

Further, there is nothing in the cited reference that teaches or suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that they might or should provide the surface light source device of amended claim 1. Moreover, the surface light source device as recited in amended claim 1 produces new and unexpected results. That is, the relative positions of the light sources and the light guide plate are more easily controlled and accurately maintained according to their design specifications.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 is submitted to be both novel and unobvious over Inui et al under both s.102(b) and s.103. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of amended claim 1 in respect of Inui et al are

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respectfully requested.

Amended claims 3 and 9 both depend directly from amended independent claim 1, and therefore should also be allowable in respect of Inui et al.

Amended claim 11 is submitted to be allowable, as detailed above under the heading Claim Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter.

Claims 11, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by USPN 6,435,685 to Matsushita.

These claims are submitted to be allowable, as detailed above under the heading Claim Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,545,732 to Nakano or US 2002/0131261 to Inui et al in view of USPN 6,286,971 to Hori.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as follows:

Amended claim 2 depends from amended claim 1, which recites "**light source holders provided at corners of the light guide plate for fixing the light source.**" This limitation of amended claim 1 is not found or taught in Nakano or Inui et al in view of Hori. There is nothing in the cited references that teaches or suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that they might or should be combined to provide

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the surface light source device of amended claim 1.

Furthermore, the surface light source device of amended claim 1 produces new and unexpected results. That is, the relative positions of the light sources and the light guide plate are more easily controlled and accurately maintained according to their design specifications.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 is submitted to be unobvious and patentable over Nakano or Inui et al in view of Hori. Amended claim 2 depends from amended independent claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of amended claim 2 are respectfully requested.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 2002/0131261 to Inui et al in view of USPN 6,286,971 to Hori.

Amended claim 12 is submitted to be allowable, as detailed above under the heading Claim Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter.

Claims 5 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 2002/0131261 to Inui et al.

As regards claim 5, applicant refers to and relies on the above assertions regarding the patentability of amended claim 1 over Inui et al. under s.103.

Claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice, and the rejection relating thereto is now moot.

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Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,545,732 to Nakano or US 2002/0131261 to Inui et al in view of US 2002/0044437 to Lee.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as to claim 8 as follows:

Claim 8 indirectly depends from amended claim 1, which recites "light source holders provided at corners of the light guide plate for fixing the light source." This limitation of claim 1 is not found or taught in Nakano or Inui et al in view of Lee. There is nothing in the cited references that teaches or suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that they might or should be combined to provide the surface light source device of claim 1.

Furthermore, the surface light source device of claim 1 produces new and unexpected results. That is, the relative positions of the light sources and the light guide plate are more easily controlled and accurately maintained according to their design specifications.

Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted to be unobvious and patentable over Nakano or Inui et al in view of Lee. Claim 8 indirectly depends from amended independent claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 8 are respectfully requested.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 6,435,685 to Matsushita in view of US 2002/0044437 to Lee.

Claim 18 is submitted to be allowable, as detailed above under the heading

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Claim Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter.

The newly added claims 21-24 belongs to group I wherein claim 21 defines *at least one light source holder integrally extending from the rectangular configuration, the light source holder defining a through hole extending along an imaginary axis thereof, and the light source holder extending along the axis with a distance smaller than a length of said side edge.* No references, either alone or in combination, can anticipate or render obvious these claimed subject matters of claim 21. Claim 21 and the associated dependent claims 22-24 are patentable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing, the present application as claimed in the pending claims is considered to be in a condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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